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- Special to the Daily Leader

America's only "little league" of entertainers, the non-profit American Kids Inc., has set a local talent competition to take place in Hooker, Okla., at the Hooker High School Auditorium, 301 N. Broadway, on Saturday, April 17. Entry deadline is April 2, according to Clarence Moore, Oklahoma Kids state director.

The membership and competition is open to all youth from ages 3 through high school seniors. All entrants will be eligible for a variety of honors including cash prizes.

The event is being coordinated by Wendy Keith, local director and Oklahoma Kids alumna. She may be contacted at (580) 522-1899 or (580) 652-3150. Keith has been working the past year to coordinate Oklahoma Kids, Kansas Kids and Texas Kids. All three states and more are invited to participate in this preliminary event. Entry forms and guidelines are available at www.oklahomakids.us/resources.html and may be used by young performers in all states.

The April 2 event will begin with a 9 a.m. registration followed by a parents' meeting and group number rehearsal. Competition begins at 1 p.m. An awards ceremony and cast party conclude the day.

A wide variety of prizes from cash to medallions and trophies for five age divisions are presented at all levels of competition. High school seniors are also eligible for many college scholarships awarded annually.

The different levels of competition include seven categories: country vocal, gospel vocal, serious/classical vocal, character vocal/musical theatre, popular vocal, dance and specialty acts.

The event is followed by other optional progressive levels of talent competitions concluding with an All Star Show at which the top act will win \$1,500. The All Star Show is judged by entertainment industry professionals and conducted in Branson, Mo., each summer.

American Kids Inc. is celebrating its 28th anniversary in 2010. American Kids is different from other competitions in the performance opportunities given the group's membership outside of the competition, according to Moore.

"Our members, with guidance from our certified adult volunteers, present a vast number of shows on the local, regional and national level to share their talent gifts for the benefit of others," he said.

For more information call Moore at (918) 512-8044 or go to the Oklahoma Kids Web site at oklahomakids.us or the national Web site at americankids.com.

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